VOLUME

01

HOW TO START DRAWING

BY LAURA H. RUBIN

VOLUME

01

HOW TO START DRAWING

Welcome to volume **one**!
This is the first volume of my series of workbooks in which I will try to share with you as much of my knowledge of drawing and art as I can.

In this volume, I want to show you **the absolute basics** that you need to know to start drawing.

The basics may seem simple to you, but they are fundamental because you cannot build solid knowledge without them. Thanks to these basics, you will have a different approach to drawing in future.

THIS VOLUME CONTAINS **4 CHAPTERS**

How to look and see properly

The basic shapes

Correct shading

Freehand portrait sketching

LEARNING TO SEE

When you are drawing something, it is crucial to know what it looks like. If you don't know what something looks like, you can't draw it.

So we look at a reference object and then copy it. Most people look at their result on paper or a screen 2/3 of the time. They look at the reference object 1/3 of the time, which means that they look at the result for far too long instead of at the reference object. So they are not drawing what they see, but what they imagine they have seen. Thus they never draw what is actually there. The right way to go about it would be the other way round: 2/3 of attention paid to the reference object, 1/3 to the result.

So before you begin, first you must learn to see properly. That's the only way to create a "library" in your head where you have properly saved all these images and can access them for future drawings.

HOW CAN YOU LEARN TO SEE?

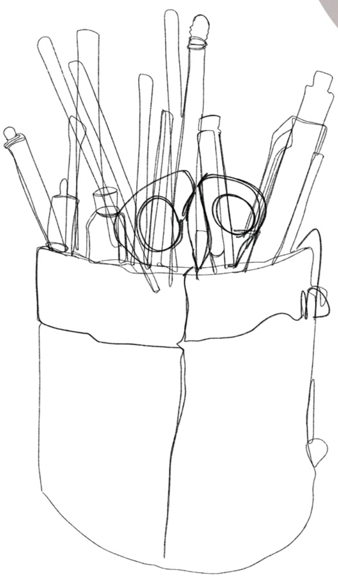
It's completely normal to look at our hands when we are doing something with them... because we want to see what we are doing. However, when drawing you have to try to suppress this need somewhat. The best way to learn this is simply by **not** looking at the result on the paper or screen. So you are drawing blind, so to speak.

Let's do an exercise and you will immediately realise how to look and see correctly.

Find a simple reference object nearby. Choose a suitable point on the paper or the screen and start drawing this object without lifting your pen. Don't look at your result at all, just look at the object.

THERE IS SPACE TO PRACTICE ON THE NEXT PAGE.

This technique helps you to draw exactly what you see, not what your mind imagines you can see.



LIKE MINE, YOUR RESULTS MAY NOT LOOK VERY GOOD XD

BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER, BECAUSE IT'S JUST ABOUT LEARNING HOW TO CONCENTRATE ON THE REFERENCE OBJECT PROPERLY.

CHAPTER 1 – LEARNING TO SEE

Try to draw at least 4 simple objects blindly.

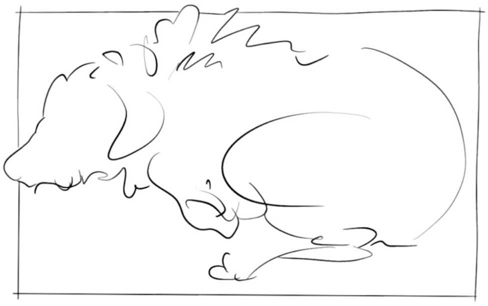
Draw the 4 objects again.
This time you can look at your result as you go along, but preferably only as rarely as possible.

COMPLEX OBJECTS

The technique of "drawing blind" or "almost drawing blind" is also ideal for drawing extremely complex objects. Here is a quick example of how to go about it:

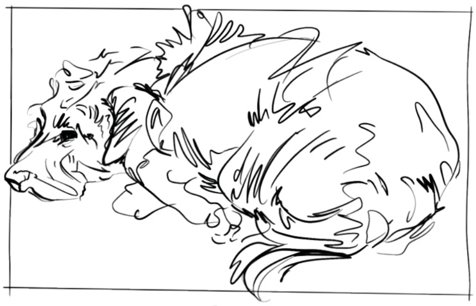
BOOK RECOMMENDATION:

I learned this exercise from **Sarah Siblet**. In her book **"Sketchbook for the Artist"** she explains this and other methods in more detail.



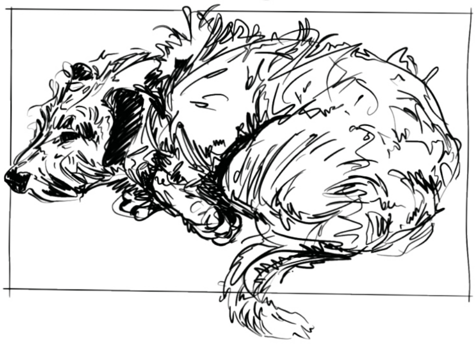
1.

At first, only draw the rough outlines, while looking at the paper or the screen as rarely as possible.



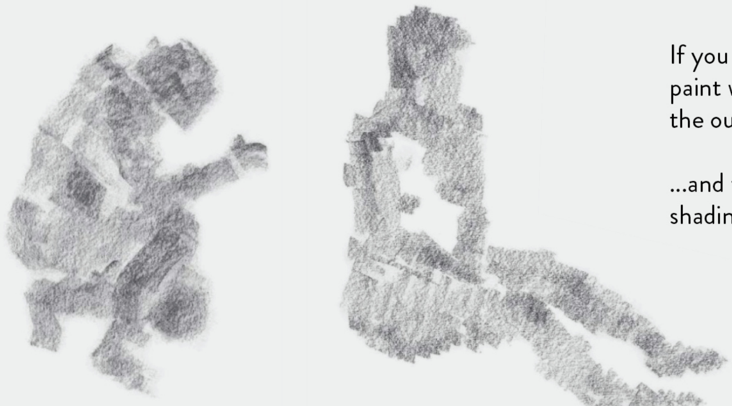
2.

Then try to draw everything inside the outline while still almost entirely only looking at the reference object. Focus only on the essentials.



3.

Finally, you can draw in the details and shading. In this step you can look at the result more often again, since you have already included the most important elements from the reference object.

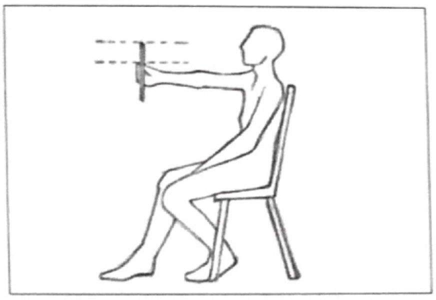


If you prefer to draw with charcoal or paint with thick brushes, you can define the outlines that way

...and then add the details in darker shading, as shown in the example above.

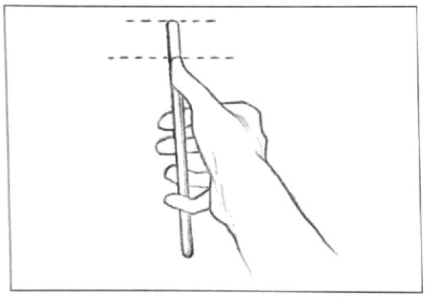
MEASURING CORRECTLY

When drawing, it can sometimes be very difficult to correctly estimate certain lengths and distances. So just use your drawing tool as a yardstick:



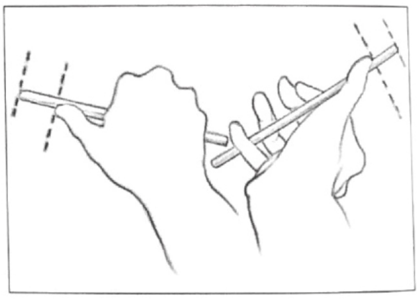
1.

Sit somewhere you won't get uncomfortable too quickly. Stretch your arm straight out in front of you, holding your pen up vertically. Remember the posture because it only works if you keep returning to this position while measuring.



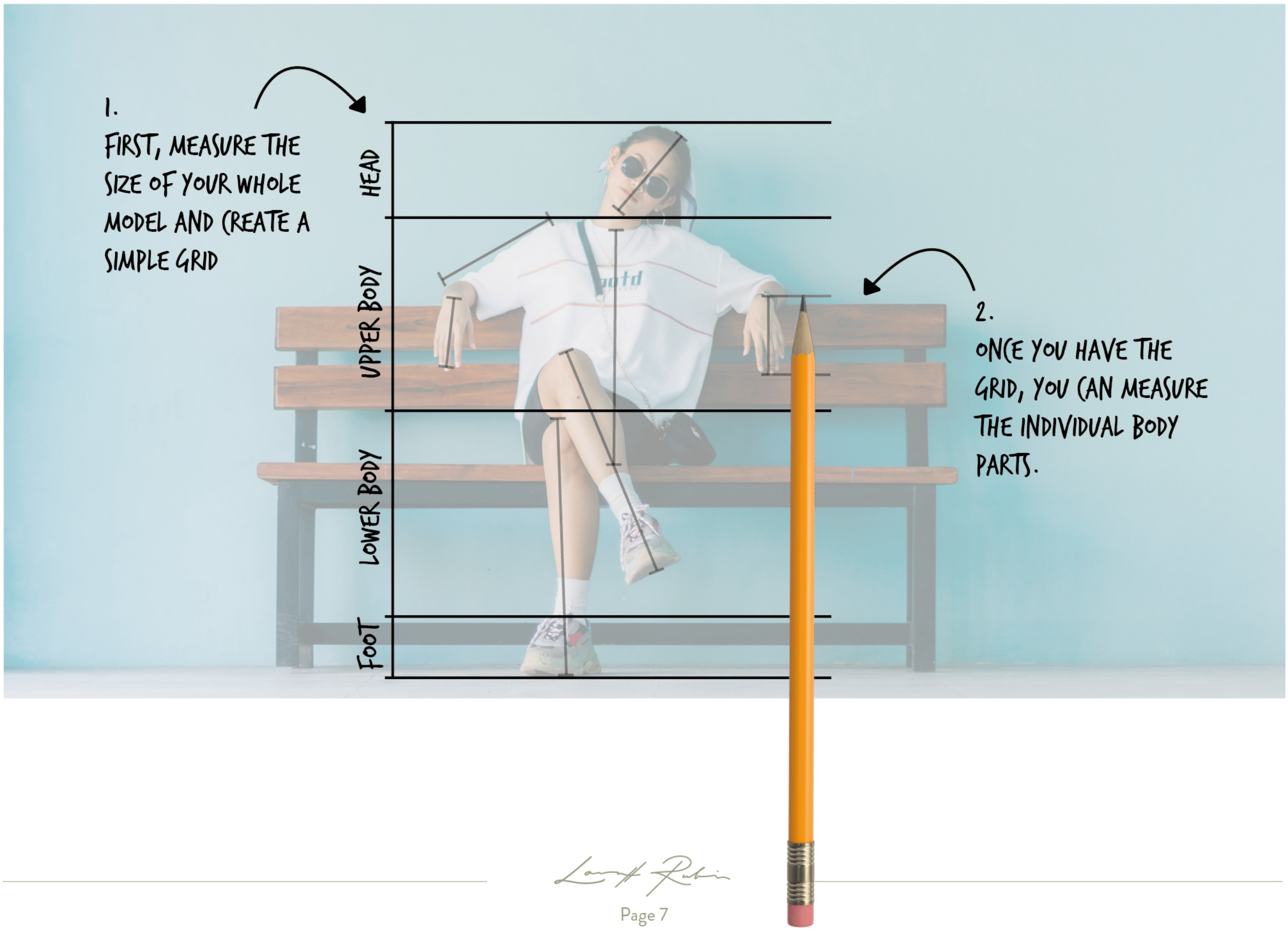
2.

Close one eye and use your thumb to measure from the pencil point the distance you want to transfer to the paper.



3.

Always hold your pencil in the same way and compare and measure every angle of the model. Take your time and at first only draw very fine markings on your paper or screen.



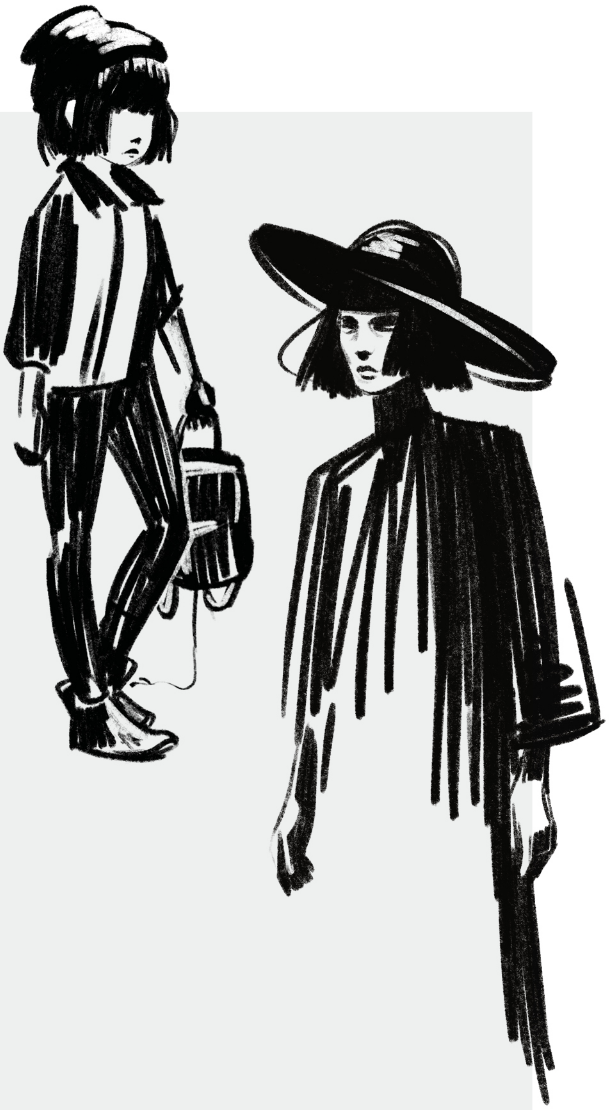
1. FIRST, MEASURE THE SIZE OF YOUR WHOLE MODEL AND CREATE A SIMPLE GRID

2. ONCE YOU HAVE THE GRID, YOU CAN MEASURE THE INDIVIDUAL BODY PARTS.

To learn to look properly and concentrate on the essential shapes, you can also go outside and draw people walking by. Since you only have a short time to look at the model, you are automatically forced to pay the model your full attention for this brief moment and to concentrate on the most striking things.

Try to draw things this way as often as you can. This exercise will change your whole approach to drawing and increase the library in your head, so at some point you will no longer need a reference model.

LET'S GIVE IT A TRY!



NOTE

Two short hints, which are more relevant for analogue/ traditional artists, but can also be interesting for digital artists.

START SMALL ...

... regarding the format of your medium. If you are unsure, choose a small sketchbook instead of a big canvas. The bigger your picture is, the more details you will need until it looks finished. Especially in the beginning, when you don't have the patience to spend many hours on a painting, you should rather try to invest your energy in a smaller drawing.

Of course everyone has different needs, and you should definitely try everything at some point. But remember that size is not the most important thing to get a good painting!

THINK ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

When buying working materials, always take the time to check if the purchase does cause unnecessary damage to the environment. Especially nowadays, when our rainforests are hardly existing, each of us is responsible to look at the sustainability of the products we use.

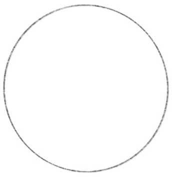
Here are a few simple tips:
- Look out for recycled paper
- Watch out for harmful substances in the colours. This mostly concerns cheap products.
- Buy pencils made of wood, bamboo or cork instead of plastic.
- Think before you start drawing. Do not throw away a piece of paper if you are not satisfied with the result. Treat all your work material with respect.

If you are not sure if the product is harmful to the environment, ask someone for help or google the product.

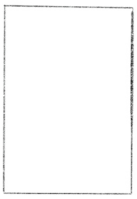
WE OWE IT TO OUR PLANET <3

BASIC SHAPES

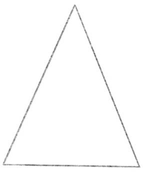
Almost any object can be divided into different basic shapes.
From these basic shapes there are 4 different types:



CIRCLE



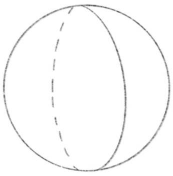
RECTANGLE



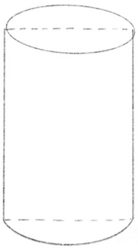
TRIANGLE

SQUARE

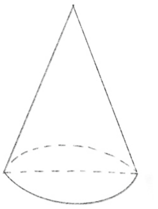
These basic shapes can be easily transformed into
3 dimensional shapes:



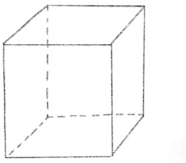
SPHERE



CYLINDER

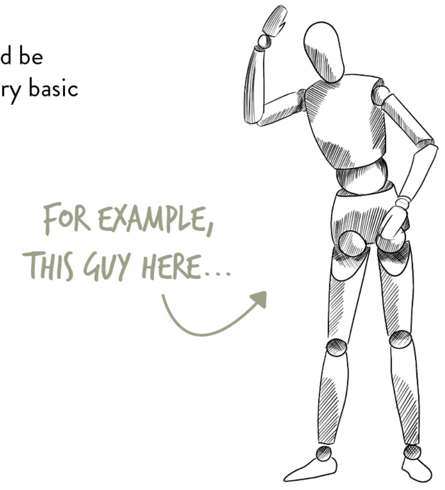


CONE

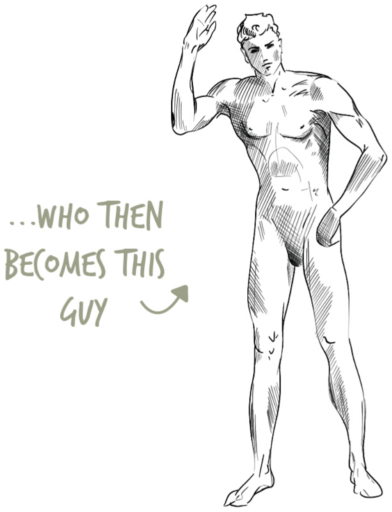


CUBOID

With these shapes it should be possible for us to draw every basic object shape.



FOR EXAMPLE,
THIS GUY HERE...

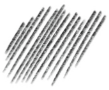


...WHO THEN
BECOMES THIS
GUY

SHADING

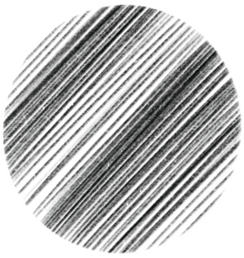
In order to bring these shapes (from the previous page) to life, we must first know how to shade them correctly.

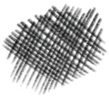
There are different techniques to create realistic shading... which are all correct, it just depends on your style and what is more convenient for you:



HATCHING

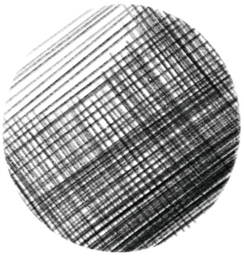
Fast results

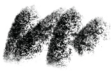




CROSS HATCHING

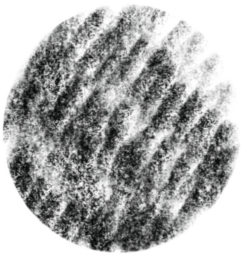
Darker results

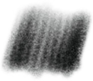




PATTERN HATCHING

Drawing with charcoal



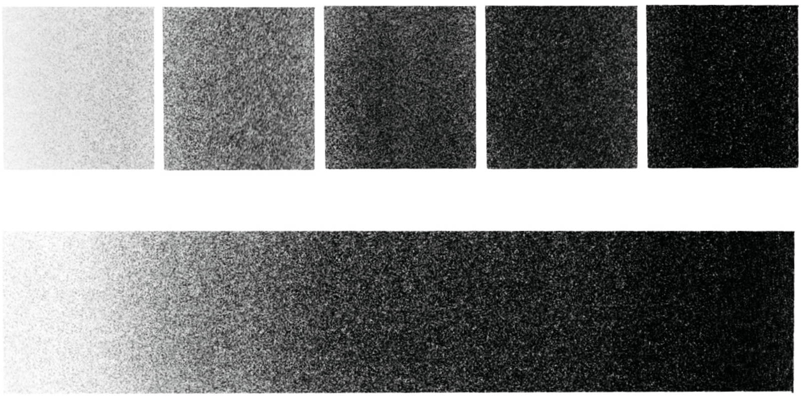


GRADIENTS

More realistic results

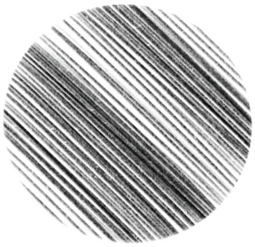
Of course, there are thousands of shading possibilities, these are just a few examples; which my teachers also recommended!

Regardless of which technique you choose, you should be able to draw different color gradations:

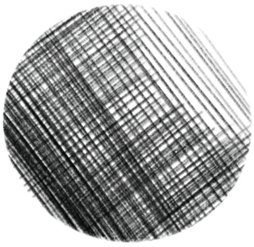


LET'S DO SOME EXERCICES
ON THE NEXT PAGE >

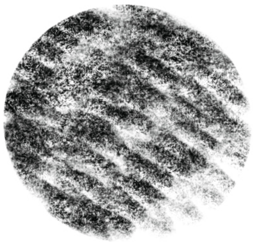
Choose your favorite techniques and create a gradient as shown on the previous page.



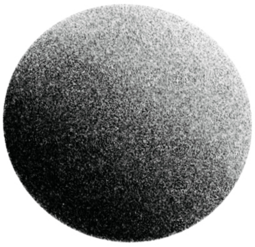
HATCHING



CROSS HATCHING



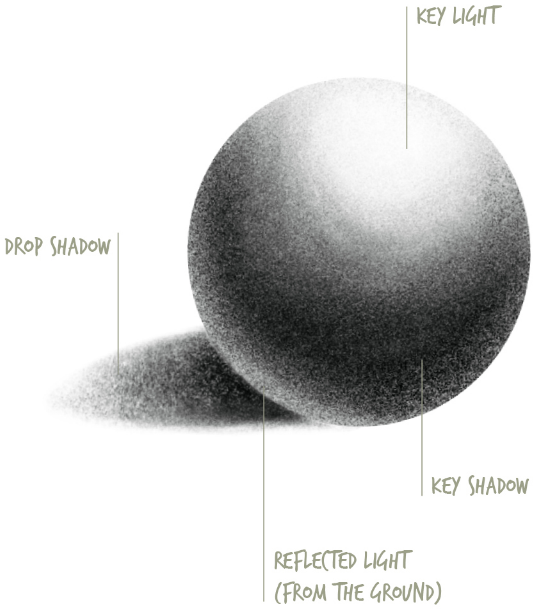
PATTERN HATCHING

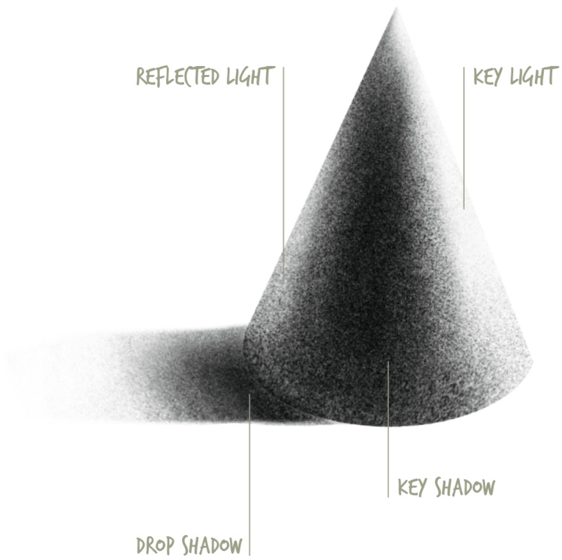


GRADIENTS

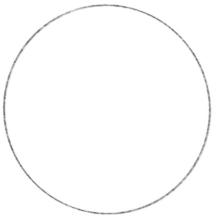
Now we can try to shade our base shapes,
which we talked about before.

EXAMPLES:

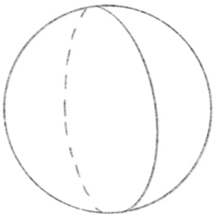

KEY LIGHT
DROP SHADOW
KEY SHADOW
REFLECTED LIGHT
(FROM THE GROUND)


REFLECTED LIGHT
KEY LIGHT
KEY SHADOW
DROP SHADOW

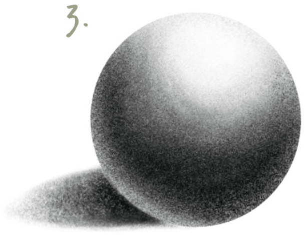
1.



2.



3.

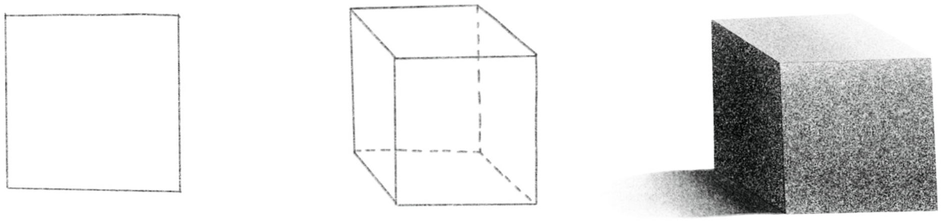


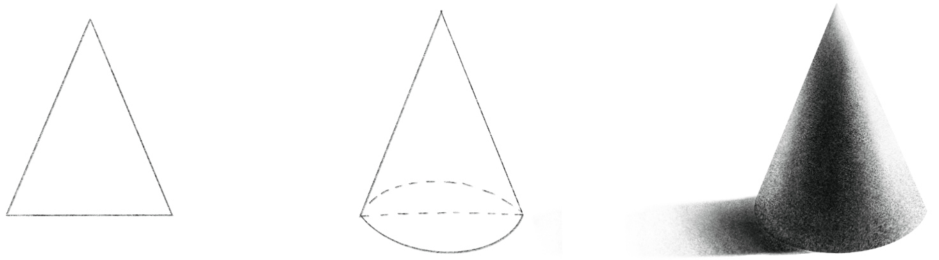
USE THIS
SPACE FOR
DRAWING

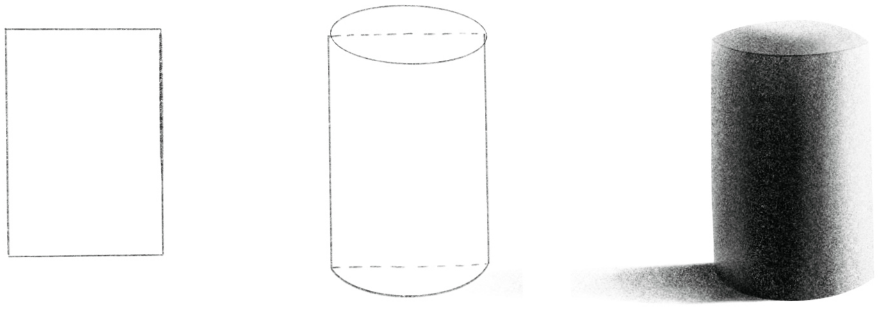
1.

2.

3.

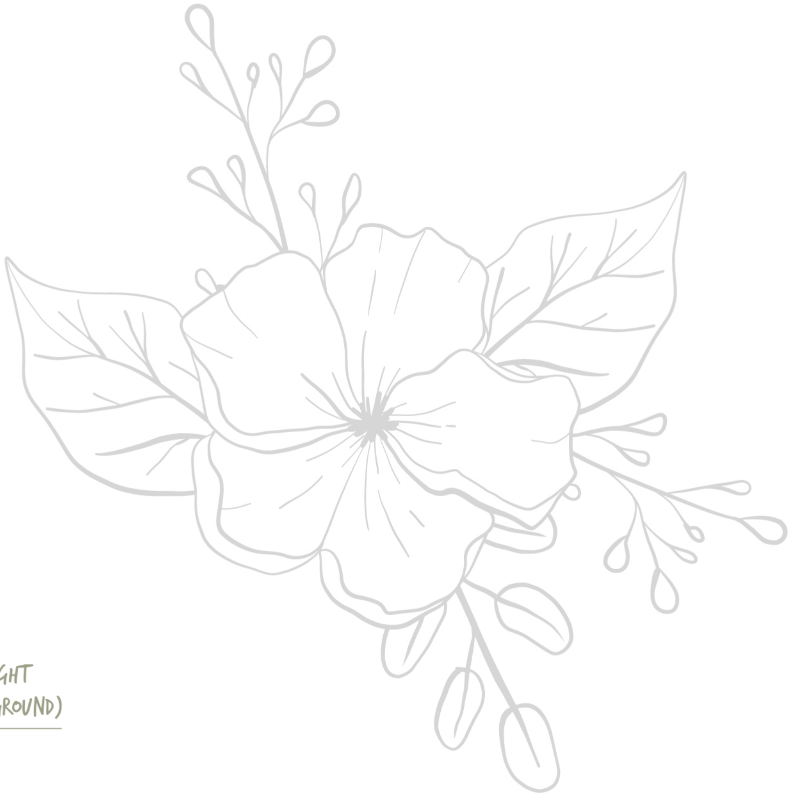


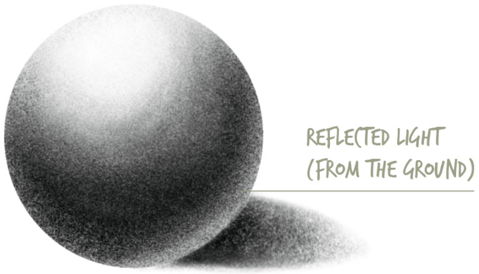




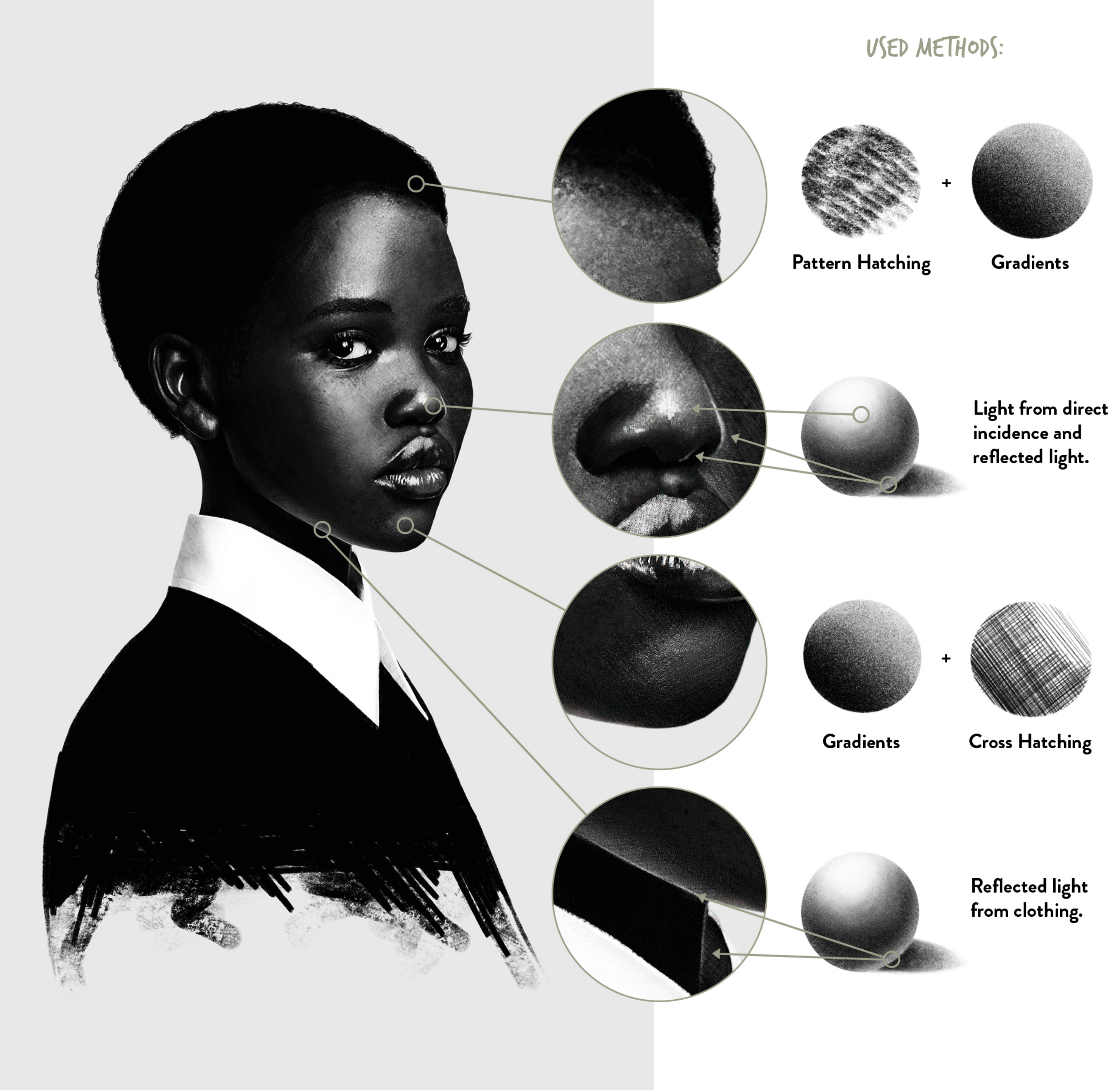
WELL DONE!

Now try to shade a more complex object realistically. Before you start, think about where your light is coming from and whether the flower is on a background. A background would mean that the light would bounce off the background so the flower would also slightly lit from below, like the sphere in this example:





Now let’s see how these shading methods can be applied and combined in practice by having a look at my portrait drawing of ***Adut Akech***:

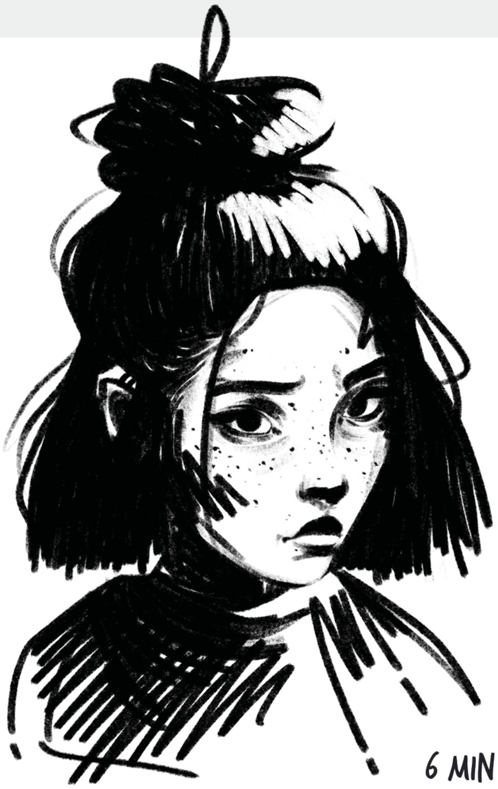

USED METHODS:
Pattern Hatching
+
Gradients
Light from direct incidence and reflected light.
Gradients
+
Cross Hatching
Reflected light from clothing.

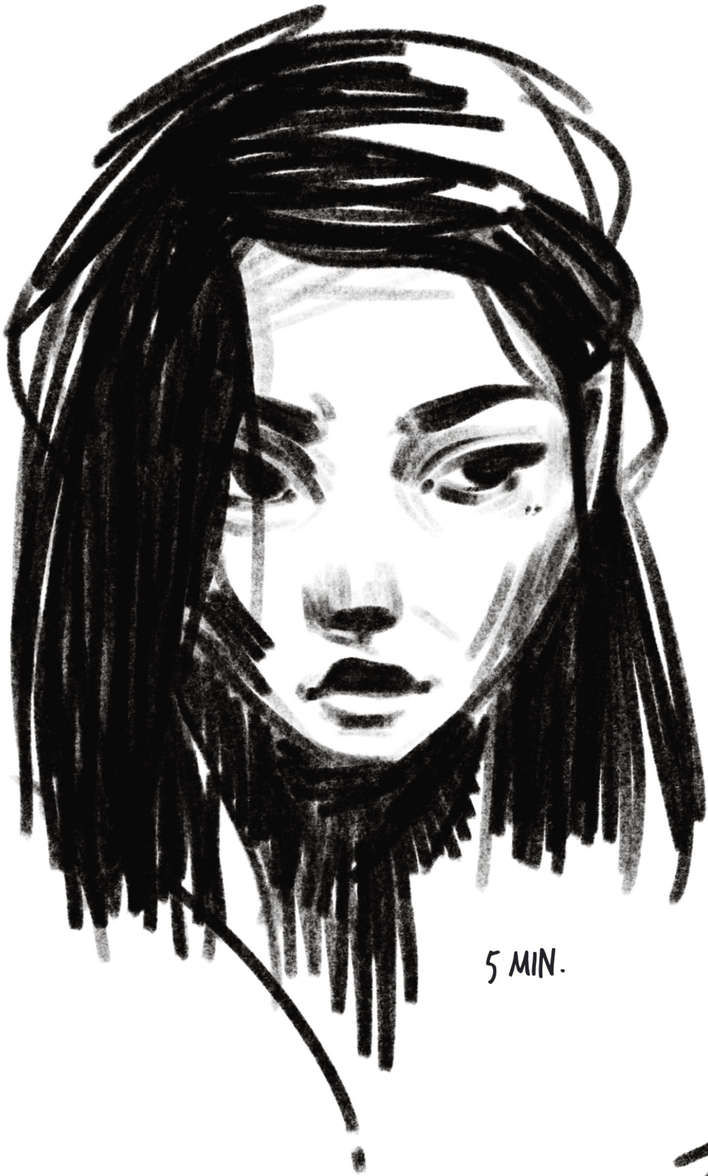
For now, it is probably too early to draw such a portrait, as there are still many unanswered questions. But don’t worry, that will come. In the meantime, we can already venture into another portrait type…

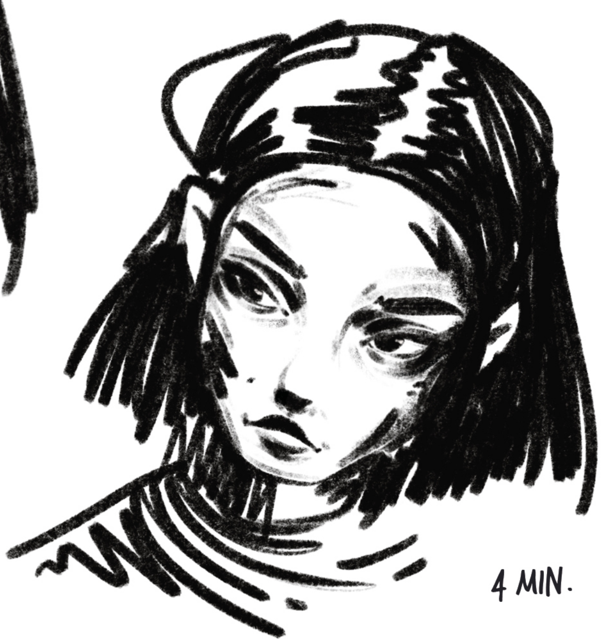
FREEHAND PORTRAIT SKETCHING

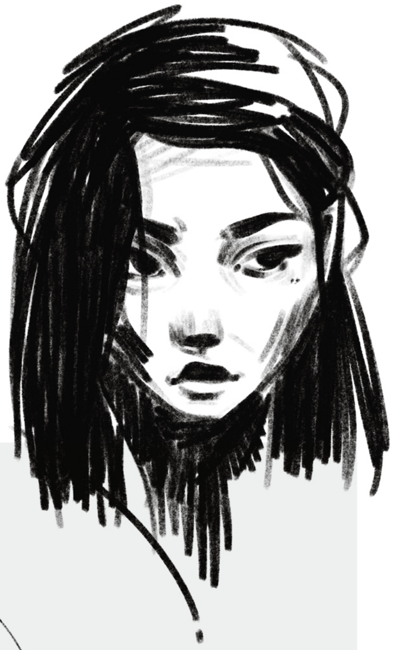
I know the basics of drawing can be enormously boring... So let's try something more exciting to push the motivation a bit.

Freehand drawing is a wonderful thing, because living reference models take you out of your comfort zone and force you to work quickly and not think too much.









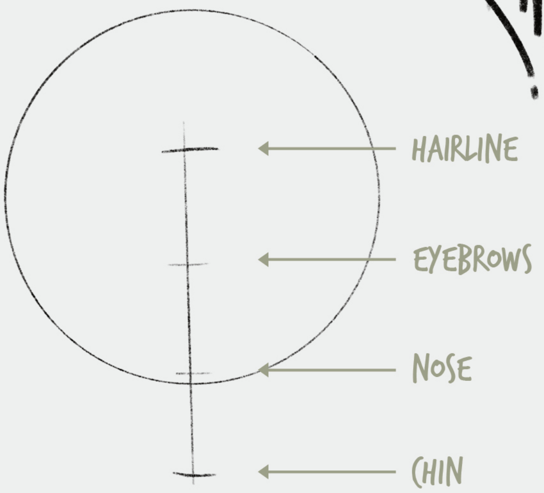
Take a sheet of paper or create a blank layer and try to repeat this technique:

1.

We first create a simple grid.

If you know the Loomis method, I would recommend you to create the Loomis grid, because it simplifies a lot. The Loomis method is a bit too extensive to explain here, so we will use a different grid.

If you want to learn the Loomis method from me, you can find it in my workbook «***How to draw the Head***».



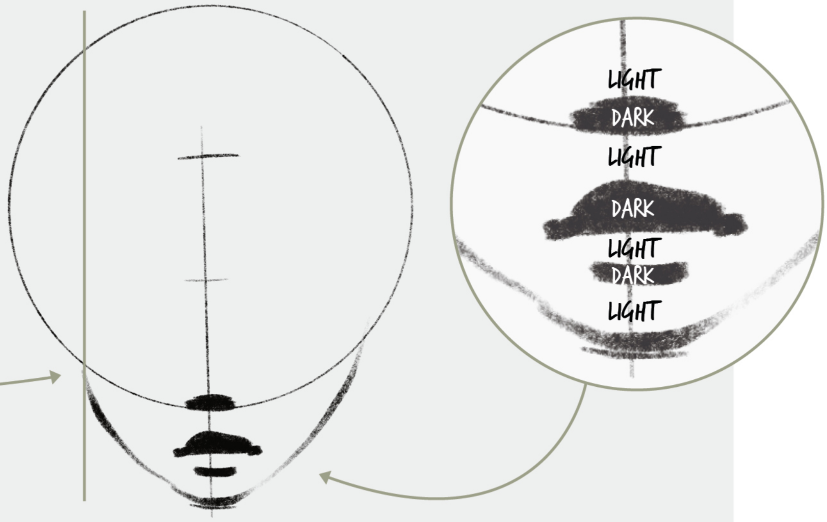
2.

Create chin, mouth and nose.

Use a thick pencil to avoid wasting time on details. If you are working in Procreate, use the pen “6B Pencil” in the “Sketching” category.

Make sure that the jawbone is not as wide as the circle.

For the nose and mouth, **we only draw the shadows**. Make sure you alternate the shading, as in the example on the right.



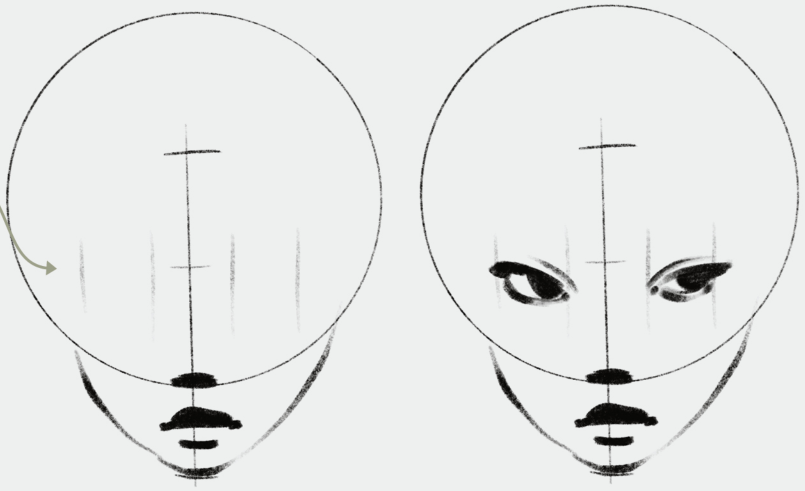
3.

The eyes are, as always, the most difficult part, so we first make four guide lines.

Start with the two middle lines. They have about the same distance apart as the upper lip is wide.

Then make the two outer lines. They are again the same distance apart as the upper lip is wide.

Tip: Draw closed eyes if open eyes are too complicated for you.

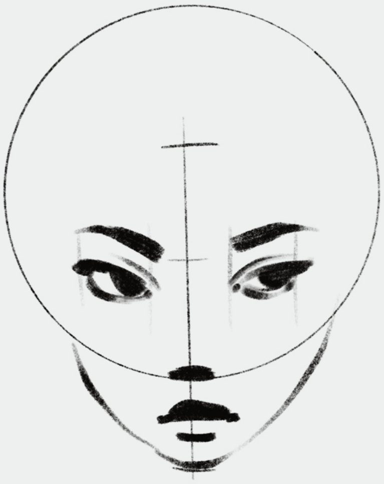


4.

The eyebrows are just above the guide line we marked at the beginning.

The eyebrows are a little longer than the marks we made for the eyes. But you can still use them again as a guide.

Don’t waste too much time on symmetry. Slight asymmetries are hardly noticeable anyway and also create a more exciting character.

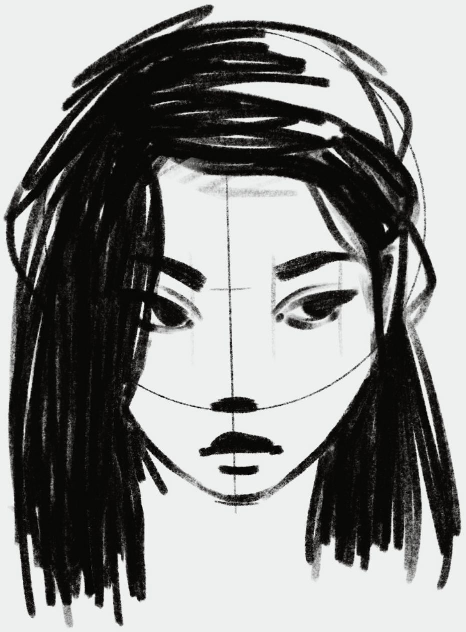


5.

The hair is a rather simple part.
If you are not yet happy with the shape of the head, you can adjust it with the shape of the hair.

Also make sure to cut out some areas that simulate the highlights.

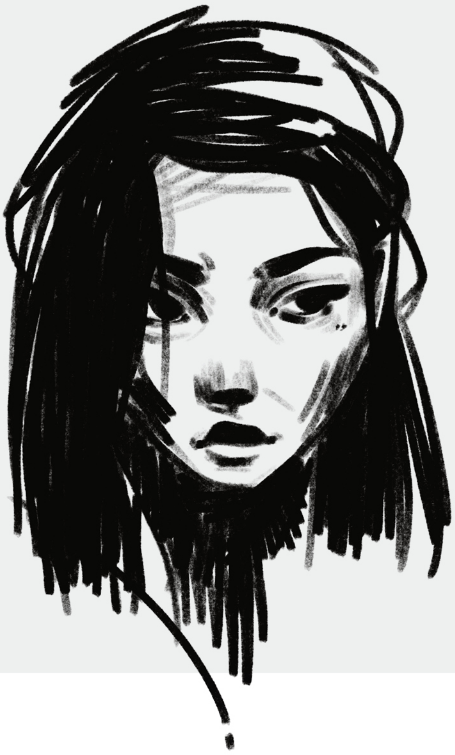
This portrait style is defined by the wild lines you draw. So don't think about every single line and just go for it. :D



6.

Shade the neck and delete the guide lines.

Add a few more shades or facial features to give your character the final touch.



WELL DONE!

I really hope this Workbook was helpful for you!

Please note that all of these methods are merely aids that you can use however you want. So, to get good results you don't necessarily have to do everything exactly the same way.

If you liked this workbook, I would be very pleased to receive a positive rating.

If you have any feedback or questions, please contact me on ***www.laurahrubin.com***

xo

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